



LookOut

August 8, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 15

ORS Mission:

We deliver pensions, related benefits and services to promote the future financial security of our customers.

ORS Vision:

Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.

ORS Calendar August

State Employees Board
Meeting 12th
ORS Picnic 14th
Employee Open Enrollment
Begins 17th
EMPAC Book Sale 19th
ORS Golf Outing 20th

September

Public School Employees
Board Meeting 4th
Employee Open Enrollment
Ends 6th
State Employees Board
Meeting 11th
DMB Celebration 16th

Repairing the road – Roadside Beautification Team Focus on Clarety ease-of-use issues

In the last issue of the *LookOut*, we introduced you to the Repairing the Road to Fast and Easy Access project – ORS' effort to clear out the customer service traffic jam caused by our Vision ORS construction project.

While the Emergency Road Crew begins paving the first of our potholes (backlogs), the Vision Project team is actively looking for ways to make daily work easier and faster.

Staff has identified that one of the biggest speed bumps in processing daily work is the design of the Clarety and Siebel screens. The Business Process Owners and Business Process Leaders have been asking for your comments and design requests. Three of these have already been fixed.

1. In Siebel, the ability to hit "enter" to return a query.
2. In Clarety, changed the Member Account Inquiry pages so the most commonly used page always displays first.
3. In Siebel, the ability to search using multiple fields.

The rest of your requests have been presented to the project management

team, who heard you loud and clear. When the project team began exploring these changes with Covansys, they were excited to find out that Covansys was already working to improve the design of the basic Clarety program.



To incorporate Covansys' improvements and the specific changes you requested, a Roadside Beautification Team is being assembled to address ease-of-use issues. Road-

side Beautification Team members will come primarily from Covansys and will not be the same people who are working on other program fixes.

They will evaluate features like screen color, fonts, shortcuts and tabs and customized screens. They will not address underlying functionality, but will focus on appearance changes that will let you move around the screens faster.

Here are some of the changes the team is considering for Clarety.

1. Let you customize which page appears first after login.

See Repairing the road on page 3

ORS at Cadillac Place – the Detroit Outreach Office



by Joy Bartell

Life at Retirement Services in the big city is not all that different from the

Lansing office – with one major exception – the size of our staff. Think of the Detroit office as Lansing “Lite.” Our staff consists of two retirement analysts, **Chuck Simpson** and me, and our receptionist, **Tawny Anderson**.

As an extension of the Lansing office, we’re able to provide our customers with almost all of the same services the main office provides. What we can’t do is accept payments or calculate and issue service credit billings.

For an idea of what we do in Detroit, follow us around during a typical week. Callers and visitors to Detroit ORS are professionally and warmly greeted by Tawny. She has our walk-in customers sign in and notifies Chuck and me of the arrival of the customers who have scheduled counseling appointments.

While Chuck and I individually meet with those customers who are within one to two years of retirement, Tawny takes care of our phone and walk-in customers. She stays busy dispensing retirement application packets and other forms, requesting UBI billings and income verifications from the main office, accepting and reviewing completed retirement applications, and scheduling counseling

appointments. Callers and walk-in customers who require more detailed information are directed to Chuck or me.

Like the Lansing office, Monday is usually our busiest day for phone calls and walk-ins. In addition to previously scheduled appointments, we’ve had as many as 21 walk-in customers. During the Early Out for state employees last year, we met with 477 customers in the week before the application deadline. Whew! Those were BUSY days!!

Chuck and I belong to the Customer Education-Outreach process. Besides meeting with customers in the office, we also conduct PRIMS (Pre-Retirement Information Meetings) around the state. From October through the end of April, we’re on the road about every other week giving a two-hour general retirement overview to sometimes as many as 150 people at various ISDs (school districts). We may also meet individually with as many as 30 customers during a three-day visit at that ISD. We talk with them about their personal retirement situations and answer any questions they might have about their eligibility and future retirement benefits. Before the visit, we spend considerable time preparing pension estimates and

appointment confirmation letters. We also have to make sure that we will have enough PRIM packets, retirement applications, and other forms available at the PRIM.



We are fortunate to have newly-renovated offices, just like main office folks have. In April 2002, we moved from our previous location on Sixth Street (near the old Tiger Stadium) to what had been the General Motors Headquarters.

The building was renamed the Cadillac Place and the architectural design in the lobby area is absolutely breathtaking. Besides Chuck’s and my office cubicles, our 4th floor office includes a reception area for customers, a storage room

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Repairing the road . . .


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For example, Customer Accounts staff might want the Work Site to appear first, but Benefit Management staff might prefer to see the My Work tab first.

2. Mouseless navigation – use tab keys and ALT+ shortcuts for common activities.
3. Minimize scrolling by listing activities on the side of the screen, rather than at center screen where individual customer data appears.
4. Within My Work click directly to the next work item instead of stepping through multiple screens to select the next work item.

Construction Update:

 Our Emergency Road Crew will move to their new location on Monday to begin paving the potholes.

 Watch the entrance to Wing A this week as the Customer Education staff builds our road map.

5. Simplify Transaction Summary by creating standard views and expanded views. The standard view will display the key information you need on one screen (no scrolling right). If you need to see more, you can click to expand the view. Benefit Management is collecting staff suggestions for appearance

changes to Clarety, Siebel, and Filenet. The list will be forwarded to Covansys to be included in the project.

When will some of these changes happen? The best target we have right now is sometime this fall. The *LookOut* will keep you posted on the progress of the Roadside Beautification Team, so watch here for news.

Ho'omaha loa, mai e 'ai! (Translated: Retirement, come and eat!)



Get out your Hawaiian shirts – light up those tiki torches – make your own lei out of hibiscus flowers, and cut up that pineapple! It's time to get ready for the 7th annual ORS Employee Picnic – with a Hawaiian theme of course!!

Thursday, August 14 we're heading for Frances Park where EMPAC will be throwing a *hau'oli, nui* (happy, big) picnic they've been planning for months. Games, prizes, food, fun, and a few surprises are all in store for ORS employees on this much looked-forward-to day. We know we won't have to worry about the weather, because we've got the cover of the pavilion that will hold us all if it rains again!

All day will be a casual dress day, so come in your best Hawaiian attire – but remember that you still need to follow the appearance guide-

lines, so no shorts allowed while you're in the office. (You can change before you get there.)

Check out the invitation you got last week for directions on getting to Frances Park. See you there!!

Mai poina, hele me hoohiwahiwa! (Translated: Don't forget; come celebrate with us!) *Aloha!!*

Comings & Goings at ORS

ORS said farewell to **Sam Williams** from Plan, Design, and Deployment on July 18. Sam took a position as an attorney in Augusta, Georgia.

David Hoppe, a temporary employee working in Customer Accounts, left ORS on Friday, August 1. He accepted a permanent position with a company in Jackson.

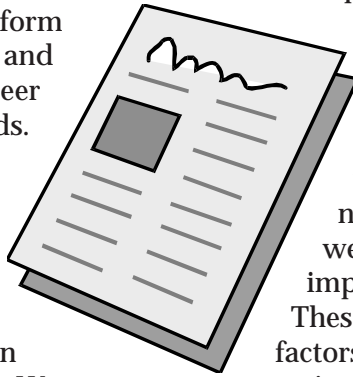
Employer Reporting said good-bye to two of their temporary staff last week. **Sara Loubert's** last day was Thursday, July 31 and **Heather Inosencio** left on Friday, August 1.

Latest CEM report now available

We've been through a lot of changes as an organization in the past three years, and thanks to CEM we can document the progress we've made in a number of different areas. What is CEM? CEM stands for Cost Effectiveness Measurement, Inc., a Toronto-based research firm that analyzes how retirement systems perform against certain benchmark standards and reports how organizations within a peer group rank against the same standards.

CEM analyzes the operations of 63 international retirement systems of all different sizes with various types of members. Our peer group is made up of the 19 largest U.S. participants, but those participating in the study may vary from year to year. We are one of the largest systems participating in the report. Within our peer group, the median number of members served is 376,027 while ORS serves 550,000 members.

In preparing its yearly report, CEM looks at levels of service provided, cost of operations, quality of the organization's processes, and the use of technology. Comparing these factors within the peer group, CEM determines who rates as "Best-in-Class" in each of these areas. Compared to others, we rate as a high-volume system with low costs. This means that the services we provide are offered to a large number of members at a relatively low cost per member.



When we started Vision ORS several years ago, we contracted with CEM to have an independent evaluation of where we stood at that point in terms of our operation. We wanted to see how we compared to CEM's standard benchmark and to our peers before starting our process-based approach to business and all of our technology changes.

As Vision ORS has moved forward, we've been able to observe where we've improved and where we still need to focus our efforts to be the best we can be. For example, we've seen improvement in our service credit scores. These scores are made up of a number of factors, such as the activities performed, services provided, and the quality of the service. Our scores have also improved on how quickly we get our retirees on payroll. However we still have some work to do before our members will have online access to their member data and be able to conduct some of their business using the internet.

Once we complete Vision ORS, the CEM report will provide us with an independent evaluation of our overall progress and how much we've improved since we started this project.

If you would like to see a copy of the latest CEM report or you have questions about it, e-mail **Ben Louagie** or call him at 21412.

Detroit Outreach Office

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for supplies and equipment, and a comfortable conference room for meetings or reviewing important videos, like the latest All-Staff Meeting video.

While we unfortunately miss out on a lot of the wonderful activities that EMPAC sponsors, we take some degree of consolation in the amenities our surroundings have to offer. We have many retail establishments in and around our building.

On our lunch hour, we can visit the bank or credit union, enjoy lunch at one of several full-service restaurants, mail a package at the post office, or go shopping at various stores.

At least quarterly we get together with the rest of the Customer Education folks, and we enjoy coming up for the bigger staff events too, such as the annual holiday party, the All-Staff Meetings, and the ORS employee picnic. So, we'll be joining you soon to enjoy food, fun and games at the Hawaiian luau picnic! See you then!